

# THE STORY OF THE GREAT PANAMA CANAL— BY THE MAN WHO BUILT IT!

The Day Book is proud today to present to its readers the first part of "The Story of the Panama Canal," written by Col. George W. Goethals, the man who built the canal—that most stupendous piece of human handiwork in the world's history. This is the first article Col. Goethals has written since he took charge in Panama a half dozen years ago. Although often importuned by magazines and newspapers, he would not put his pen to paper until his job was completed or practically completed. The Day Book wishes to announce that it has secured exclusive rights of publication of this important article in this city.

In "Part I," which we print today, Col. Goethals gives an outline of the kind of canal proposed to be built and some idea of the objections to it that were first raised, as well as the enormous difficulties that had to be met and overcome in the building. He starts his story from the enactment of the first Panama legislation by the United States Congress. In very brief form he tells of the discussion of the sea level and lock types which raged throughout the country. Col. Goethals' story is a plain, simple tale of a wonderful achievement. The language is direct as are his methods. It can be understood as well by the school child as by the teacher who reads it to him.—The Editor.

## PART I.

BY COL. GEORGE WASHINGTON GOETHALS,

Corps of Engineers, United States Army, Chairman and Chief Engineer, Isthmian Canal Commission.

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It is not possible in the time at my disposal to enter upon a description of the explorations and investigations which were made of the various routes proposed for a canal joining the two oceans, nor can any account be taken of the consideration which resulted in the United States finally adopting the Panama route. Suffice it to say that under the Spooner act, approved June 28, 1902, the president of the United States secured the necessary concession from the republic of Panama, purchased the rights and property of the French New Panama Canal Co. and undertook the construction of the canal May 4, 1904.

The Isthmus of Panama runs nearly east and west, and the canal traverses it from Colon on the north to Panama on the south, in a general direction from northwest to southeast, the Pacific terminal being 22

miles east of the Atlantic entrance.

The greatest difficulty of the Panama route was the control or disposition of the Chagres river and its tributaries. The canal which the president was authorized to construct by the provisions of the Spooner act was the lock type recommended by the first Isthmian canal commission in its report submitted Nov. 16, 1901. This plan provided a lake for controlling the Chagres, following along the plans of the New Panama Canal Co., thereby utilizing to the fullest extent the work already accomplished.

Early in the progress of the work the construction of a sea level canal was agitated; this is undoubtedly the ideal canal. It took such a hold on the public mind that, in consideration of the international importance of the work the president convened a board of consulting engineers to consider and report upon the type of